

- d) determining at the computer, subsequent to the inputting of step c) and based on bids from participating bidders, whether there is at least one object which is desired by only one bidder and, if so, assigning the determined object or objects to the determined bidder, and
- e) repetitively performing steps c) and d), if any objects remain available.

40 ~~77~~³⁹
78. A method as recited in claim ~~77~~³⁹ wherein, prior to step a), participating bidders receive information concerning numbers of available objects and prices.

41 ~~78~~³⁹
79. A method as recited in claim ~~77~~³⁹ wherein, prior to steps a) and c), participating bidders receive information concerning numbers of available objects and prices, and wherein the bids of steps a) and c) represent quantities of objects.

42 ~~79~~⁴¹
80. A method as recited in claim ~~79~~⁴¹ wherein a determining step includes summing quantities from bids from all but one bidder to produce a first sum and comparing the first sum with a number of available objects.

43 ~~80~~⁴²
81. A method as recited in claim ~~80~~⁴² wherein a determining step also includes, in the event the first sum is less than the number of available objects with which it is compared, assigning to the one bidder a number of objects equal to a difference between said number of available objects and said first sum.

44 ~~81~~⁴³
82. A method as recited in claim ~~81~~⁴³ wherein an assigned object is assigned at a most recent price.

45 ~~82~~⁴³
83. A method as recited in claim ~~80~~⁴³ wherein a determining step also includes summing quantities from bids of all but another bidder to produce another sum and comparing the another sum with a number of available objects.

46 ~~83~~⁴⁰
84. A method as recited in claim ~~77~~⁴⁰ wherein the inputting includes:

- a1) providing a participating bidder with a terminal,
- a2) receiving bid information at the terminal from a participating bidder, and
- a3) sending bids to the computer based on the received bid information.

47 ~~84~~⁴⁴
85. A method as recited in claim ~~84~~⁴⁴ which also includes:

- f) sending information relating to the determination of step b) to one or more terminals associated with participating bidders, and

g) sending information relating to the determination of step d) to one or more terminals associated with participating bidders.

48 ~~85~~ 47
86. A method as recited in claim ~~85~~ wherein step g) further includes providing information to terminals of participating bidders indicating whether the auction has terminated.

49 ~~86~~ 40
87. A method as recited in claim ~~86~~ wherein the determining steps are associated with information on prices and numbers of available objects.

50 ~~87~~ 40
88. A method as recited in claim ~~87~~ wherein bids comprise quantities of objects.

51 ~~88~~ 49
89. A method as recited in claim ~~88~~ wherein bids comprise quantities of objects.

52 ~~89~~ 51
90. A method as recited in claim ~~89~~ wherein a determining step includes summing quantities from bids from all but one bidder to produce a first sum and comparing the first sum with a number of available objects.

52 ~~90~~ 52
91. A method as recited in claim ~~90~~ wherein a determining step also includes, in the event the first sum is less than the number of available objects with which it is compared, assigning to the one bidder a number of objects equal to a difference between said number of available objects and said first sum.

54 ~~91~~ 53
92. A method as recited in claim ~~91~~ wherein an assigned object is assigned at an associated price.

55 ~~92~~
93. A computer system for implementing an auction of a plurality of objects, two or more bidders participating in the auction, the auction allowing assignment of objects to one or more of the bidders at different prices, the computer system comprising:

- a) input means for receiving bids from participating bidders,
- b) first determining means for determining whether there is at least one object which is desired by only one bidder based on the bids detected by the input means and for assigning the determined object or objects to the determined bidder,
- c) second input means for receiving bids from participating bidders effective after operation of the first determining means,
- d) second determining means for determining whether there is at least one object which is desired by only one bidder based on bids detected by the second

input means and for assigning the determined object or objects to the determined bidder, and

- e) control means to maintain operation of the second input and second determining means so long as objects remain unassigned.

56 ~~93~~
94. A computer system as recited in claim ~~93~~⁵⁵ which further includes communication means conveying to bidders information concerning numbers of available objects and prices.

57 ~~94~~
95. A computer system as recited in claim ~~94~~⁵⁶ which further includes communication means conveying, to bidders, information concerning numbers of available objects and prices, and wherein the first and second input means receive bids including information related to quantities of objects.

58 ~~95~~
96. A computer system as recited in claim ~~95~~⁵⁷ wherein said first and second determining means includes an adder operating on quantities from bids from all but one bidder to produce a first sum and a comparator for comparing the first sum with a number of available objects.

59 ~~96~~
97. A computer system as recited in claim ~~96~~⁵⁸ wherein the first and second determining means also includes assigning means for assigning to the one bidder a number of objects equal to a difference between said number of available objects and said first sum.

60 ~~97~~
98. A computer system as recited in claim ~~97~~⁵⁹ wherein the determining means assigns objects at a most recent price.

61 ~~98~~
99. A method as recited in claim ~~98~~⁶⁰ wherein the first and second determining means also includes an adder for adding quantities from bids of all but another bidder to produce another sum and a comparator for comparing the another sum with a number of available objects.

62 ~~99~~
100. A computer system as recited in claim ~~99~~⁵⁶ which further includes:

- a1) a terminal related to a participating bidder, the terminal including
- a2) a receiver for receiving bid information from a participating bidder, and
- a3) a transmitter sending bids from the terminal.